



Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Development Area 14 Bidder's Conference

January 20, 2022

CCG Annex Building – Main Conference Room
420 Tenth Street, 1st Floor
Columbus, Georgia 31901

These minutes encompass an overview of the discussion and questions and answers generated during the Bidder's Conference for the solicitation of Youth Services held by the Columbus Consolidated Government Job Training Division on behalf of the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Development Area 14. This conference was held at 10:00 a.m., January 20, 2022, at the Columbus Consolidated Government's Annex Building Main Conference Room, 420 Tenth Street, 1st Floor, Columbus, Georgia.

Please be reminded that this was the only opportunity questions and answers could be provided during the solicitation process. Good luck.

Organizations Represented:

Ms. Shae Anderson, RLA Academy
Ms. Beverly Combs, Partnership In Caring
Ms. Shani Forte', Partnership In Caring
Ms. Roberta Hall, IN THE DOOR, LLC
Ms. Stephanie Hundley, Goodwill Industries of the Southern Rivers
Mr. Tracey Mosley, Urban League of Greater Columbus
Mr. Jerry Myers, IN THE DOOR, LLC
Ms. Carla Piatt, RLA Academy
Ms. Johnnie Powell, Operation M.E.N.
Mr. Frank Robbins, Goodwill Industries of the Southern Rivers
Ms. Lakisa Russell, Second Chance Transition, Corp.

WIOA Staff:

Feleshia Marshall, WIOA Assistant Director
Lisa Lane, WIOA Administrative Staff



Overview

The facilitator welcomed all attendees to the Bidders Conference. Attendees were informed that this was the only opportunity available to ask questions concerning the proposal for youth services that had been released.

The facilitator provided a brief overview of the purpose of the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Board (LCWDB) announcing the release of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding to organizations interested in providing youth workforce development services to Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Area Fourteen (WDA-14) youth ages 16-24. It was noted the LCWDB is soliciting proposals for three (3) separate activities:

1. Youth services to be provided to in-school youth (Juniors and Seniors in high school) in the seven counties of Chattahoochee, Clay, Harris, Quitman, Randolph, Stewart, and Talbot.
2. Youth services (Internships – Work Experience) to be provided to out-of-school youth (ages 18 – 24) residing in Muscogee County only; and
3. Youth services (Combined Pre-employment skills training and On-The- Job training) to be provided to out-of-school youth (ages 18 – 24) residing in Muscogee County only.

The facilitator noted this RFP is issued for a period, July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023, with an option to renew for two additional years depending on available funding and successful performance outcomes. All successful bidders will be required to continue to provide required services to any carryover participants still actively enrolled in the WIOA youth programs as of June 30, 2022, that may be associated with the programs identified. This, however, will not count toward the number of youths required to be served under this proposal nor shall additional funds be allocated to serve the additional youth that may be identified as carryovers. The Administrative Entity may, based upon contract negotiations, assign carryover youth already enrolled in the WIOA Youth Program accordingly.

The facilitator further noted that the LCWDB reserved the option to modify contracts on a year-to-year basis. Contracts will be cost reimbursement based, with funding linked to defined performance outcomes, including WIOA measures, and future funding availability, contractors' satisfactory performance and other factors as may be deemed appropriate and necessary.

The facilitator presented an overview of each of the three different solicitations in the Solicitation packet stating the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Development Board (LCWDB) had set aside approximately \$442,810.00 in total WIOA funding for youth activities identified herein, to be conducted in the eight counties, including Muscogee County, for Program Year 2022 (July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023). All contracts awarded shall be subject to renewal each year, for a period not to exceed two additional years, based upon contract performance, availability of funds, and contingent upon successful contract negotiations. Funding is for specified youth training programs and service contained as follows and identified in the solicitation packet only.

Solicitation I

ACTIVITY: WORK-BASED INTERNSHIP (WORK EXPERIENCE) ACTIVITY

Seeking an innovative year-round internship (work experience) program services activity for In-School Youth for 7 counties (Chattahoochee, Clay, Harris, Quitman, Randolph, Stewart & Talbot).

- **TARGET SERVICE POPULATION:** In-School Youth, (Juniors and Seniors in high school).
- **NUMBER TO BE SERVED:** Forty (40)
- **TOTAL FUNDING SET ASIDE FOR THIS ACTIVITY:** \$170,560.00

Solicitation II

ACTIVITY: WORK-BASED INTERNSHIP (WORK EXPERIENCE) AND RETENTION ACTIVITY

Seeking an innovative year-round program that incorporates pre-employment/work readiness skills training and internship (work experience) and retention services activity that results in job retention in unsubsidized employment at completion of training.

- **TARGET SERVICE POPULATION:** Out-of-School Youth, 18-24 years of age, Muscogee Co. Resident
- **NUMBER TO BE SERVED:** Forty (40)
- **TOTAL FUNDING SET ASIDE FOR THIS ACTIVITY:** \$157,850.00

Solicitation III

ACTIVITY: COMBINED WORK READINESS AND ON-THE-JOB TRAINING ACTIVITY

Seeking an innovative year-round program that combines work readiness skills training and on-the-job training. Such an activity shall provide work readiness in a classroom environment with on-the-job training administered in a normal working situation in which employer selects and hires the individual and places on their payroll. The employer is thus reimbursed up to 50% by WIOA Administrator for the extraordinary cost of training the individual.

- **TARGET SERVICE POPULATION:** Out-of-School Youth, 18-24 years of age, Muscogee Co. Resident
- **NUMBER TO BE SERVED:** Thirty (30)
- **TOTAL FUNDING AVAILABLE:** \$114,400.00

It was noted that the combined work readiness/On-the-Job training activity provided shall not exceed up to the maximum of 499 hours. Youth served in this activity shall be compensated by the Employer at the same prevailing entry-level wage of similar situated employees or trainees, but in no event less than the highest of the minimum wage laws, or prevailing rate of pay for individuals employed in similar occupations by the employer. Wages will be paid for the actual hours worked. The proposer will identify methodology for administering the work readiness component prior to being placed with an employer for the OJT component of training.

An inquiry was made regarding the costs of wages. It was noted that the costs of wages for youth participating in the in-school youth work experience, out-of-school youth internship (work experience) and the combined work readiness and on-the-job training activities would not be incorporated in the funds provided under this solicitation. Payment of youth wages for participation in these activities would be the responsibility of the WIOA Administration except for the on-the job training activity. The WIOA Administration shall reimburse the Employer up to 50% of the wages paid to trainee by the Employer during the training period for the extraordinary cost of supervision and lowered productivity. Funds paid for youth wages are not included in the funds made available under the three solicitations in the solicitation packet.

A brief overview of the Implementation Schedule outlined on Page 7 of the solicitation package was discussed.

The facilitator noted that Page 23, Section V, describes how proposals must be submitted. Bidders were informed that all proposals must be in sealed envelopes marked in upper right-hand corner marked as requested in the proposal packet. **“Proposal: PY22 WIOA In-School Youth Internship (Work Experience) Services; or PY22 WIOA Out-of-School Youth Internship (Work Experience) and Retention Services; or PY22 Out-of-School Youth Combined Work Readiness and On-The-Job Training”.**

Each package submitted must contain one original and four (4) copies. Each proposal must be clearly marked ‘Original’ or ‘Copy’. The original copy and all attachments, **that require signatures**, must be signed by the person authorized to enter into contracts on behalf of the organization/agency. It was stressed that the original proposal must be in **a color other than black ink** (preferably BLUE INK) in order to distinguish which is the original versus copies of the proposal.

Attendees were informed that no proposals will be accepted after the deadline for submission. As outlined on Page 7, deadline for submission is 5:00 p.m., February 18, 2022; and must be received at the Columbus Consolidated Government Annex – Job Training Division, 420 Tenth Street, 1st Floor, Columbus, Georgia. It was stressed that any proposals received after this time and date would not be accepted.

Upon receipt, proposals would be reviewed to determine responsiveness. A proposal would be considered responsive if it meets the criteria outlined on Pages 16 and 17 of the proposal packet. The Youth Committee will

review only responsive bids. The review is rated on a 100-point scale, with 5 additional points for local ownership. Minority and female business are encouraged to submit proposals.

Attendees were informed that it will be the successful bidder's responsibility to recruit participants for the services being funded. The WIOA Administration will determine eligibility.

Attendees were informed that the contract awarded will be "cost reimbursement", which means that the WIOA Administration will reimburse any costs outlined in the agreed budget that have been incurred and support documentation provided.

Page 23 outlines the submission requirements of proposals. The Cover Page (Part 2 page 2) will be submitted with all proposals.

A brief discussion pursued regarding the implementation table outlined on (Part 2 page 21) Appendix D, Registrant Goal Summary. You must identify how many people you will serve and what are your planned outcomes for 1st thru 4th quarters shall be. Attendees were informed that these are cumulative totals by which performance will be judged during the program year.

The **Proposal Checklist** is located in Part 2 on page 3. It was strongly encouraged that proposers use this tool to ensure that all required items were included in and in the order specified in their proposals prior to sealing them for submission. It does not have to be submitted with the proposal. However, the importance of its use when completing the proposal packet was stressed. Proposals that do not include the required elements and forms will be automatically disqualified. **No exceptions will be granted.**

Part 2 page 11 requires listing occupational titles that you will target and entry-level wages. You can find the O*Net codes for the positions you will target at <http://online.onetcenter.org/>

The facilitator noted that members of the Administrative Entity will conduct a pre-award monitoring during the period of negotiations and prior to actual signing of contracts with selected bidders.

APPENDIX C: Page 20-21, Fidelity bond requirements. Attendees were informed that a fidelity bond must be provided that covers the entire contract period. Pages 20-21 covers specific bonding requirements and amounts of bond required. If a position bond, each position must be bonded for the full amount.

In regard to the Budget, attendees were informed that a narrative must be submitted with a proposal that explains the costs identified in the budget. No material, labor, equipment, or facility costs will be provided unless specified in the budget and agreed upon by the WIOA Administration/Board.

Bidders were informed that all costs that are associated with providing program services must be identified on the budget form similar to that provided in the solicitation package. It was reiterated that Wages and FICA for participants should not be included as part of the proposed budgets submitted. Payment of wages will be the responsibility of the WIOA Administration.

Attendees were further informed that the assurances and certifications listed within the proposal will be part of all contracts that are awarded for Program Year 2022.

The Management Plan describes your organization. Tell us how you are set up; provide organizational chart, and how you will monitor yourself. On Page 5, you are asked to discuss your financial capability. You must also provide a copy of your UI Tax and Federal Identification number (State and Federal Tax Numbers).

The forms identified on page 7, 10, 11, 21, 25, 26, 27, 30, and 31 must be completed, signed, and included in your proposal(s).

The Certification of Debarment Certificate must be submitted with the proposal. The following list contains some of the general questions that were asked during the bidder's conference, followed by responses of the Administrative Entity. We extend our thanks to the agencies in attendance and wish all bidders good luck.

Questions & Answers

The following questions and answers were presented and responded to during the Bidders Conference.

Q. Can an individual who has graduated or gotten their GED be considered for the program?

A. *Yes, as long as the individual is not employed or currently enrolled in school, they can be referred to us for WIOA eligibility determination and assessment.*

Q. What about someone enrolled in the GED program?

A. *Yes, as stated in 20 CFR 681.230, for purposes of WIOA, in part: "high school equivalency programs, and dropout re-engagement programs are not considered to be schools for the purposes of determining school status. However, there is one exception. Youth attending high school equivalency (HSE) programs, including those considered to be dropout re-engagement programs, funded by the public K – 12 school system that are classified by the school system as still enrolled in school are considered 'In-School Youth'."*

Q. Will we select the participants from various agencies or work in conjunction with the Department of Labor and the Department of Family and Children Services?

A. *It would be your decision. You may coordinate with any agency to receive individuals to serve under your program. Just understand that the individual must be determined eligible for WIOA. Also bear in mind, this is a program of choice, which means there is no guarantee that the individual referred won't choose another agency for services once the full array of services has been explained to them.*

Q. Should we get all the participants at once or can we do them in segments?

A. *That would be your decision. The implementation schedule is a breakdown of how each of the target populations will be served and will be a part of the contract negotiations between the WIOA Administration and contractor. Just to reiterate, the WIOA Administration monitors on a quarterly basis. Our monitoring team will come out and assess if you're meeting your goals and your agency is fulfilling your programmatic, performance and compliance obligations contractually agreed upon. If you have met or are exceeding them, that is also noted.*

Q. Could we see other agency's program design for these services?

A. *No, Workforce Development Area Fourteen does not allow it.*

Q. Is it possible that more than one agency could be selected for funding?

A. *The Board has approved funding to be awarded to one agency that has an innovative program design that provides the specific youth services that each of the three solicitations (in the solicitation packet) is seeking.*

Q. What if we want to partner with another agency? Can we do that?

A. *Yes; However, proposals from consortia, partnerships or other combinations of organizations must identify one organization as the lead agency and prime contractor and must specify the assignment of subcontracting relationships. If you have an additional service that you are providing, when you complete your "Cost Allocation Plan", it should show how you are spreading your costs for additional personnel and operating expenses for providing the multiple programs. Your budget should show how much you are charging for each program based on your cost allocation split.*

Q. Is there a Retention Outcome?

A. *Yes, the retention outcome affects our Performance. It's very beneficial for a Provider to match an individual with the appropriate career path to achieve the goal of having the individual still employed six months to a year afterwards.*

Q. You stated there will be possible carry overs from the previous provider, can you tell us how many will there be?

A: *It is estimated that there may be some customers who would be considered carryover from a specific activity; however, should it be required for the awarded agency to take on the responsibility of follow-up services where applicable, coordination will be made from the WIOA Administrator (We would not have those figures until after the completion of the current program year).*

Q. Is the expectation for the participants to go through a pre-employment training component that offers some type of credential?

A: *Yes. For example, a "Certificate of Successful Completion" would be a credential certifying that a participant has successfully completed the work readiness component of your services. It is important, however, to note that the program outcome in Solicitation #3 is full time unsubsidized employment after the completion of the on-the-job training period.*

The facilitator asked if there were any additional questions, or any clarification required of what was being requested in the solicitation packet.

No further questions were asked during the Bidders Conference. Attendees were further reminded that once the meeting adjourned, no additional questions or responses could be provided. With no further discussion, the Bidders Conference was adjourned. Good Luck!